ATTACHMENT A – ALTERNATIVES DESCRIPTION

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will seek to identify the most practical and feasible high speed train (HST) options for analysis with a No-Project Alternative in the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS. The Authority and FRA will consider all reasonable alternative HST alignment and station options at a programmatic level of analysis within a broad corridor between the Bay Area and Merced generally bounded by (and including) the Pacheco Pass (SR-152) to the South, the Altamont Pass (I-580) to the North, the BNSF Corridor to the East, and the Caltrain Corridor to the West.[1] The alternatives will include:

NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The take no action (No-Project) alternative is defined to serve as the baseline for comparison of HST alternatives. The No-Build Alternative represents the state's transportation system (highway, air, and conventional rail) as it exists in 2005 and as it would be after implementation of programs or projects currently programmed for implementation and projects that are expected to be funded by 2020. The No-Project Alternative addresses the same geographic area as the proposed HST (generally from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Central Valley). The No-Build Alternative satisfies the statutory requirements under CEQA and NEPA for an alternative that does not include any new action or project beyond what is already committed, according to the following sources of information:

- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) for all modes of travel
- Airport plans
- Intercity passenger rail plans (Amtrak Five- and Twenty-year Plans)

HIGH-SPEED TRAIN ALTERNATIVES

The Authority and FRA previously selected a steel-wheel-on-steel-rail HST system for advancement, which would be over 700 miles long (1,126-kilometers long), capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour (mph) (320 kilometers per hour [km/h]) with electrically powered trains on fully grade-separated tracks, with state-of-the-art safety, signaling, and automated train control systems that would serve the major metropolitan centers of California, extending from Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, through the Central Valley, to Los Angeles, Orange County, the Inland Empire, and San Diego.

High-Speed Train Corridors

The Authority and FRA also selected a broad HST corridor between the Bay Area and Central Valley for the proposed HST System. Within this corridor there are several potential alignment and station location options that will be considered. In heavily constrained urban areas, alignment options that assume sharing corridors and/or tracks with other passenger rail services will be considered. The Authority and FRA will consider all reasonable and practical alignment and station options and will focus the program environmental analysis on the alternatives that best meet the purpose and need of the HST system. The broad high-speed train corridor is illustrated on Figure A. Within the previously selected broad corridor, the Authority would not pursue alignment options through Henry Coe State Park and station options at Los Banos.

1 Highway route numbers are provided only as a convenient reference for the reader, not as a limitation on the corridor to be considered.

Stations

Station placement will be determined based on ridership potential, system-wide needs, local planning constraints/conditions, and the application of the station area development principles described in Chapter 6B of the Final Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed HST System. Station placement will be coordinated with local and regional planning agencies, and will provide for seamless connectivity with other modes of travel. Potential station locations to be further evaluated include : Merced, Modesto, Tracy, Gilroy, San Jose, Redwood City/Palo Alto, San Francisco International Airport (SFO), San Francisco, Pleasanton, Fremont/Union City, Oakland International Airport (OAK), and Oakland. The potential sites listed represent general locations for planning purposes.

Figure A